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General Assembly

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Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction
New York, 31 May-3 June 2011

Draft format and annotated provisional agenda and organization of work

I. Draft format

1. The meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction is convened pursuant to paragraph 163 of General Assembly resolution 65/37.

2. In paragraph 163 of resolution 65/37, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to convene, in accordance with paragraph 73 of resolution 59/24 and paragraphs 79 and 80 of resolution 60/30, with full conference services, a meeting of the Working Group from 31 May to 3 June 2011 to provide recommendations to the General Assembly. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to make every effort to meet the requirement for full conference services within existing resources. The Working Group was established by the Assembly in paragraph 73 of resolution 59/24.

Methods of work

3. The meeting will be presided over by two Co-Chairs, Ambassador Palitha T. B. Kohona, Permanent Representative of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, and Liesbeth Lijnzaad, Legal Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, who were appointed by the President of the General Assembly in consultation with Member States and taking into account the need for representation from developed and developing countries.

4. The Co-Chairs elaborated the present draft format for the discussions in the Working Group, in order to best facilitate its work.

5. The meeting of the Working Group will include plenary sessions, which will be open to participation by all those listed in paragraph 79 of General Assembly

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resolution 60/30, and closed sessions, as appropriate, in accordance with the relevant rules of procedure applicable to the meetings of the General Assembly.

Agenda and annotated agenda

6. The Co-Chairs have prepared a provisional agenda for the meeting of the Working Group. The meeting will consider and adopt its agenda accordingly. With a view to assisting delegations in preparing for the meeting of the Working Group, the Co-Chairs have also prepared an annotated provisional agenda and organization of work (see sect. II).

Background documentation

7. Pursuant to paragraph 167 of General Assembly resolution 65/37, the Secretary-General has included in his annual report on oceans and the law of the sea (A/66/70) information on environmental impact assessments undertaken with respect to planned activities in areas beyond national jurisdiction, including capacity-building needs, on the basis of information requested from States and competent international organizations. The report also contains information on recent activities of relevant organizations, possible options and approaches to promote international cooperation and coordination and on key issues and questions where more detailed background studies would facilitate consideration by States of those issues.

Outcome of the meeting of the Working Group

8. The Working Group has been mandated by the General Assembly, in paragraph 163 of its resolution 65/37, to provide recommendations to the Assembly. The Co-Chairs will propose draft recommendations for the consideration of the Working Group. Delegations will have an opportunity to propose amendments to the draft recommendations prior to their adoption. The recommendations adopted by the Working Group will be made available to the Assembly at its sixty-sixth session as part of the report of the meeting, which will be transmitted by the Co-Chairs to the President of the sixty-sixth session of the Assembly.

II. Annotated provisional agenda and organization of work

Tuesday, 31 May 2011

10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Item 1. Opening of the meeting

9. The meeting of the Working Group will be opened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations or his representative.

10. The Co-Chairs will make opening remarks.

Item 2. Adoption of the agenda

11. The Working Group will be invited to consider and, as appropriate, to adopt the agenda of the meeting, as contained in document A/AC.276/L.5.

Item 3. Organization of work

12. The Working Group will be invited to consider the organization of work for the meeting, as contained in the present document.

13. The schedule of agenda items is indicative: agenda items may be advanced, depending on the progress made in the discussions.

Item 4. Examination of the scientific, technical, economic, legal, environmental, socio-economic and other aspects of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, including activities of the United Nations and other relevant international organizations

14. Under this item, delegations will be invited to address the issues referred to in paragraph 73 (a) and (b) of General Assembly resolution 59/24, namely, to survey the past and present activities of the United Nations and other relevant international organizations with regard to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction; and to examine the scientific, technical, economic, legal, environmental, socio-economic and other aspects of these issues.

15. In particular, in this context, delegations will be invited to further consider the issues referred to in paragraphs 165 and 166 of resolution 65/37. In paragraph 165, the General Assembly, inter alia, called upon States to further consider the relevant legal regime on marine genetic resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea in the context of the mandate of the Working Group, taking into account the views of States on Parts VII and XI of the Convention, with a view to making further progress on this issue. In paragraph 166, the Assembly invited States to further consider, at the meeting of the Working Group, in the context of its mandate, issues of marine protected areas and environmental impact assessment processes.

16. Relevant information is contained in the report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea (A/66/70, paras. 12-210).

3-6 p.m.

Item 4. Examination of the scientific, technical, economic, legal, environmental, socio-economic and other aspects of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, including activities of the United Nations and other relevant international organizations (continued)

Wednesday, 1 June 2011

10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Item 4. Examination of the scientific, technical, economic, legal, environmental, socio-economic and other aspects of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, including activities of the United Nations and other relevant international organizations (continued)

3-6 p.m.

Item 4. Examination of the scientific, technical, economic, legal, environmental, socio-economic and other aspects of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, including activities of the United Nations and other relevant international organizations (continued)

Item 5. Indication, where appropriate, of possible options and approaches to promote international cooperation and coordination for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction

17. Under this item, delegations will be invited to address the issues referred to in paragraph 73 (d) of resolution 59/24, namely, to indicate, where appropriate, possible options and approaches to promote international cooperation and coordination for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction.

18. In this context, delegations will also be invited to address the issues referred to in paragraphs 165 and 166 of resolution 65/37.

19. Relevant information is contained in the report of the Secretary-General (ibid., paras. 211-261).

20. Accordingly, it is proposed that delegations indicate, where appropriate, possible options and approaches to promote international cooperation and coordination for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, as follows:

(a) Strengthening the information base (ibid., paras. 213-221);

(b) Capacity-building and technology transfer (ibid., paras. 222-227);

(c) Implementation (ibid., paras. 228-234);

(d) Integrated management and ecosystem approaches (ibid., paras. 235-239) as well as cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination (ibid., paras. 257-261);

(e) Environmental impact assessments (ibid., paras. 240-244);

(f) Area-based management tools, in particular marine protected areas (ibid., paras. 245-251);

(g) Marine genetic resources (ibid., paras. 252-256).

Thursday, 2 June 2011

10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Item 5. Indication, where appropriate, of possible options and approaches to promote international cooperation and coordination for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction (continued)

3-6 p.m.

Item 6. Identification of key issues and questions where more detailed background studies would facilitate consideration by States of these issues

21. Under this item, delegations will be invited to address the issues referred to in paragraph 73 (c) of resolution 59/24, namely, to identify key issues and questions where more detailed background studies would facilitate consideration by States of these issues.

22. Discussions under this item will take into account paragraphs 165 and 166 of resolution 65/37.

23. Relevant information is contained in the report of the Secretary-General (ibid., paras. 262-268).

Friday, 3 June 2011

10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Item 7. Consideration of recommendations to the General Assembly

24. The Co-Chairs will propose draft recommendations for the consideration of the Working Group. Delegations will have an opportunity to comment on the draft and adopt recommendations to be transmitted to the General Assembly, as requested in paragraph 163 of resolution 65/37.

3-6 p.m.

Item 7. Consideration of recommendations to the General Assembly (continued)

Item 8. Other matters

25. The Working Group will consider any other matters that delegations may wish to raise.

Item 9. Closure of the meeting.